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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/09/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [PE](#)

SUBJECT: HUMALA'S POSITION IS NO TO COCA ERADICATION AND
OUT WITH FOREIGN MILITARY

Classified By: PolCouns Alex Margulies Reason: 1.4 (b,d)

Summary

1. (C) Ultra-nationalist, "outsider" presidential candidate Ollanta Humala condemned alleged aerial fumigation of coca crops (which does not occur in Peru) and said, if elected, his government would end coca eradication, promote coca industrialization, and not welcome foreign military in the country. His declarations came while campaigning in Ayacucho in an area of intensive illegal coca production. While on-site Humala placed a symbolic coca plant in the ground and sported a "coca is not a drug" T-shirt. Though previously sending mixed messages on eradication, Humala took a clear pro-coca stance. Most interesting however, was his misunderstanding or conscious misrepresentation of the U.S. counternarcotics program to say he would ban foreign military personnel from operating in Peru. End Summary

Humala pledges an end to eradication

2. (U) Ultra-nationalist, "outsider" candidate Ollanta Humala while campaigning in Ayacucho held a rally in the main plaza where he told an estimated 3,000 supporters and press that his government would immediately cease coca eradication, promote coca industrialization, and stop coca crop fumigation (which does not occur in Peru). Afterward he traveled to nearby rural coca growing areas of the Apurimac and Ene River Valley (VRAE) where he met with cocaleros, planted a coca plant, and continued his pro-coca discourse. (Note: The VRAE is an area where 98% of the coca is illegal and there is no history of traditional use. End Note.) Humala told reporters that he favored profitable crop substitution and that the GOP should improve roads and ensure that these products reach markets. (Note: In a 1/30 press interview with Argentine daily "El Clarin", Humala was quoted as saying he favored eradication of illegal coca. End Note.)

3. (U) In his campaign swing, Humala was accompanied by his Andean Parliament candidate and cocalero leader Elsa Malpartida. Humala reportedly wore a T-shirt that read, "Coca leaf is not a drug." Humala told the press and supporters that he would prevent the fumigation of coca fields and that spraying harms other productive crops. Malpartida showed Humala what she falsely claimed was a destroyed coca field that had been sprayed with chemicals from police helicopters. Humala said he would defend the

legal productive activities of coca growers in the zone. Humala also told reporters that he did not see a relationship between narcotrafficking and terrorism.

Humala says Industrialization is the answer

¶4. (U) Humala told reporters in late January and again on his recent trip to Ayacucho that industrialization of coca is the solution to the coca problem. At the Ayacucho rally he said that the over-production of coca is an agricultural issue and not a Ministry of Interior (police/security) issue. On 3/8, Humala party spokesperson, Daniel Abugattas told the press that an Humala government would distribute some 27 million pieces per day of bread made from coca flour for social programs including feeding poor, hungry children.

¶5. (C) Isaac Mekler, Humala's Congressional candidate for Callao, told Poloffs in January that the coca issue is important to Humala because of the "thousands of families" growing coca without an alternative source of income. Mekler said Humala believes it is "inhumane" to destroy their farms and their livelihoods. According to Mekler, Humala's coca policy will likely be two-fold:

-- in the near term, crop substitution with subsidies including roads, services, infrastructure; and

--in the long term, industrialization of coca.

¶6. (C) Mekler said Humala realizes the licit coca market currently is not large enough to absorb the supply, however he expects that scientific advances will increase the uses and demand for licit coca. (Note: Humala in his recent coca industrialization rhetoric does not acknowledge these flaws

in his argument. End Note.) Former Interior Minister Fernando Rospigliosi has recently emphasized in the press that industrialization cannot absorb the supply of coca since only 0.2 percent of the 110,000 tons of coca leaf that Peru produces goes to industrial uses.

Humala says no foreign military in Peru

¶7. (C) In response to a misinformed question (see below) from an "El Comercio" reporter about how an Humala government would deal with the DEA and aircraft interdiction flights, Humala said, "I am not in favor of foreign forces in my country. Therefore in a nationalist government we will re-establish the equilibrium that, here in Peru, the only military forces that should exist and prevail are the Peruvian armed forces." (Note: While Humala's statement was in response to a question on counternarcotics interdiction, it seems to apply generally to foreign military. Aerial interdiction terminated in Peru in April 2001 following the shootdown of a plane carrying American missionaries. End Note.) Humala elaborated, saying that aircraft interdiction should be done by Peruvian military or police. In response to a direct question on whether Humala would let DEA and NAS stay in the country, Humala equivocated, "if they are military forces, no; they would not stay in the country. I am not in favor, I repeat, of foreign forces in my country. That I would not allow."

Comment

¶8. (C) Humala's coming clean on his pro-coca stance was not a surprise. He, along with his pro-coca congressional candidates are using the strategy of Bolivian President Evo Morales and others to decouple the problem of coca cultivation from cocaine production and trafficking. Humala is either poorly informed on, or consciously misrepresenting, the counternarcotics program, as he perpetuates the myths of fumigation/spraying as well as the idea that industrialization is a viable option. Of particular interest is Humala's hostile response to the role of the U.S. military in Peru, which he, of course, misrepresented. Counternarcotics is a police issue in Peru. Office of

Aviation Police (DIRAVPOL) pilots fly NAS helicopters. End
Comment.
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